

Help For Small Agencies Doing Good Work

By BRAD SMITH · NOV 27, 2015

"There are a lot of small organizations doing good work, and small amounts of money will in fact help them either expand or be more effective." The mantra of John Urban, the President and CEO of the Greater Rochester Health Foundation.



Victor.

He calls the foundation mid-sized. But that size allows it to help smaller organizations do their work because often, the agency needs are too small for larger foundations. Urban tells how they helped a hospice in

"It's a two bed hospice run by volunteers who needed two new mattresses, because the mattresses they had were 20 years old. So, for a few thousand dollars, we were able to provide them with the funds to get a new mattress."



John Urban, GRHF President/CEO

Urban says the GRHF purposely makes its applications simple, and will even run workshops to help agencies new at [applying](#). It awards grants in the spring and fall. This time it awarded 300-thousand dollars in grants to 27 agencies.

One recipient was a neighborhood food pantry that needed a ramp, because some of the people it served couldn't manage the stairs from the street. If you can imagine, they had to stop and ask passersby to find someone inside.

"The notion of somebody standing outside of a food bank, having to ask a stranger for help, in our minds, is just not respectful of that particular person and their needs," said Urban.

Another grant helped one town in the Finger Lakes replace street signs.

"That may not sound like a health issue but if you're an ambulance service or the fire department and can't find the residence because the street doesn't have a name it obviously is very difficult either for emergency services or the fire department to respond."

The town and two fire departments applied, and received money for signage and the nuts and bolts to hold them. Volunteers put them up. Diane Larter oversees the grant program.

"They've got a system set up so they can put a sign on any new property or any changed property and make sure that people don't take 'em down because people sometimes take 'em down and then you can't find them with the emergency vehicles."

Larter says the [foundation](#) has distributed \$1.1 million dollars in just the last two years through small grants helping small agencies do good work.

<http://wxxinews.org/post/help-small-agencies-doing-good-work>